

February 2008

SCHOOL FINANCE UPDATE

A Monthly Newsletter Published by the School Finance Division

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This newsletter is emailed to school districts, county superintendents, county treasurers, and auditors each month. The newsletter is intended to reach all district staff involved in budgeting, accounting, enrollment, special education funding, and federal programs. Please forward this newsletter to all interested parties. Got suggestions for items to include here? We'd love to hear from you!

School Finance Staff Announcements

We are sad to announce that **Bonnie Maze** (Financial Specialist Supervisor) retired from OPI after 17 years of service. Her last day in the office was Thursday, January 31, 2008. Bonnie has been a tremendous asset to the School Finance Division and other divisions of OPI, school districts and county officials over the years. Her hard work and dedication to the development of the MAEFAIRS, Payment and County electronic systems along with her knowledge and expertise in budgeting, bonds, guaranteed tax base aid and many other areas of school finance will be sorely missed by all. Thanks, Bonnie – we wish you many hours of relaxation and fun in your new life adventures!

We are pleased to announce the following new staff members joined the School Finance Division:

Janelle Graybeal joined the School Finance Division on February 11. She has stepped up to fill the big shoes left behind by Bonnie Maze. Janelle spent the past 2½ years as an auditor of school district and other local government financial statements. Prior to that, Janelle was the District Clerk/Business Manager for Philipsburg Schools and Hall Elementary for several years. Her experience with schools also includes a 3-year term as a school trustee. Welcome, Janelle!

Adam Anfinson joined the division in January as Financial Specialist in charge of training, impact aid, tuition, elections and his fair share of technical assistance. January 28. Adam holds a bachelor degree in Finance and Management from U of M and most recently worked as a financial advisor. Adam says he looks forward to learning all he can about school finance and will be ready to hit the road in July for summer workshops. Welcome, Adam!

For more information, contact Denise Ulberg dulberg@mt.gov or (406) 444-1960

School Election Update Absentee voter confirmation forms

Senate Bill 443, passed in the 2007 regular legislative session, revised the times at which the election administrator must mail address confirmation forms to electors who have requested absentee ballots for future elections. The bill revised 13-13-212 (4)(b), MCA to state, "the election administrator shall mail an address confirmation form in January and July of each year to each elector who has requested an absentee ballot for subsequent elections. The address confirmation form mailed in January is for elections to be held between February 1 following the mailing through July of the same year and the address confirmation form mailed in July is for elections to be held between August 1 following the mailing through January of the succeeding year." The Secretary of State's office has advised OPI that the term "election administrator" in this case means the county election administrator, not the school district clerk acting as the election administrator in a school election. School district clerks are no longer required to mail an address confirmation form to voters who previously requested an absentee ballot for all elections.

The 2008 School Election Calendar has been revised to reflect this change in law. The calendar is posted on the OPI website at:

<http://www.opi.mt.gov/PUB/PDF/SchoolFinance/forms/08ElectionCalendar.pdf>

SB443 is available at this link: <http://data.opi.mt.gov/bills/2007/billpdf/SB0443.pdf>

For more information, contact Adam Anfinson aanfinson@mt.gov or (406) 444-4524

Full-Time Kindergarten Start-up Costs Reminder

Districts that intend to offer a full time kindergarten program before July 1, 2012 and that have not already applied for additional funding for FTK with the PAA-3 form should complete and submit the Intent to Offer a Full-Time Kindergarten Program form. The form is available on the OPI website at: <http://www.opi.mt.gov/PUB/pdf/SchoolFinance/forms/07IntendFTK.pdf>

Completed forms should be sent to Kathleen Wanner by fax to (406) 444-0509 or by mail to P.O. Box 202501, Helena, MT 59620-2501.

Upon receipt of the intent form, OPI will issue payment of the OTO Start-up costs on the next scheduled payment. Since payments for start up funds are based on kindergarten students reported on the October 2006 enrollment count, some districts will not be eligible for these funds. A report detailing these payments can be found on the OPI website at:

<http://www.opi.mt.gov/PUB/pdf/SchoolFinance/budget/FY08OTOPFTK.pdf>

For more information, contact, Kathleen Wanner kwanner@mt.gov or (406) 444-9852

FY 2009 Indirect Cost Rate Applications Now Available

Districts that plan to charge indirect costs (e.g., general administration, accounting services, and personnel services) to FY2009 federal and state grant awards using an indirect cost rate must complete an indirect cost application form. Districts that want to recover IDCs from federal or state programs administered by the OPI must submit a "Certification and Request for Authorized Indirect Cost Rate" application to the OPI School Finance Division for approval by April 30th. Application for an indirect cost rate does not increase the amount of the grant award.

The early submission date will ensure that districts' approved indirect cost rates (IDCs) are loaded into the Electronic Grants Management System (E-Grants) when the 2008-2009 E-Grant applications are available to districts. Indirect Cost Rate Application forms and resources for FY2009 are available on the OPI website.

Indirect Cost Rate Cover Letter (please read):

<http://www.opi.mt.gov/PDF/SchoolFinance/Acct/CoverFY2009.pdf>

Indirect Cost Rate Instructions:

<http://www.opi.mt.gov/PUB/PDF/SchoolFinance/Acct/IndirectInstruction2009.pdf>

If you intend to reclassify costs to adjust your indirect cost rate please read through the indirect cost rate instructions carefully. For your convenience, costs that may be reclassified are highlighted in blue. We have also created a reclassification calculator for aiding in the determination of your adjusted indirect cost rate. The calculator is located at the following link. http://www.opi.mt.gov/PUB/PDF/SchoolFinance/Acct/FY09_IDC_Calculator.xls

Schedule A, which shows preliminary rates:

http://www.opi.mt.gov/School%20Finance/ApprovedIndirectCost/FY08_09/ScheduleA/

The Certification forms:

http://www.opi.mt.gov/School%20Finance/ApprovedIndirectCost/FY08_09/Certificates/

For Information, contact Paul Taylor ptaylor2@mt.gov or (406) 444-1257

School Bus Driver Training Opportunity

Greenfield Elementary School
590 Hwy 431
Fairfield, MT 59436-9214

Registration Deadline: March 7, 2008

Hosted by Greenfield Elementary
\$10.00 Includes lunch
8:00 Registration and check-in
8:30 to 5:00 with ½ hour for lunch

For more information, contact: Joyce Schrock randj@tetonwireless.net or (406) 467-2439 and cell: 406-590-2438

FY07 Federal A-133 Audits due March 31, 2008

A-133 "Federal" audits for FY2006-07 are due to OPI by March 31, 2008. This affects districts and cooperatives that spent more than \$500,000 of federal money (including USDA commodities) during FY2006-07.

For districts and cooperatives that spent less than \$500,000 of federal funds and received more than \$200,000 of revenue under all sources during that year, audits for FY2006-07 are due June 30, 2008.

Audited financial statements must comply with national reporting requirements passed by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) under Statement No. 34. For more information about GASB 34, see the GASB 34 webpage at <http://www.opi.mt.gov/schoolfinance/gasb34.html>

For more information, contact Rebecca Phillips rphillips2@mt.gov or (406) 444-0783

Obtaining Payments for State-Paid Tuition

As in accordance with MCA20-5-321 (1),(d) and (e), OPI is responsible for payment of tuition for students placed in a district outside the student's district of residence by a state agency or court, including tribal court.

During the 2006-07 school year, student attendance agreements (FP-14/FP-14A) for these placements were received, reviewed and approved by OPI and input in the Tuition module on MAEFAIRS. Districts may now log on to MAEFAIRS through Citrix on OPI's website to access a list of approved FP-14/FP-14A forms and enter the days enrolled for each agreement. When the days enrolled has been entered for all agreements on the list, the district should "submit" the information and MAEFAIRS will automatically generate a payment. Districts have until June 30, 2008 to complete this process. Complete information and instructions are available at:

<http://www.opi.mt.gov/PDF/SchoolFinance/Tuition/STPdTuitionInstruc.pdf>

For more information, contact Denise Ulberg dulberg@mt.gov or (406) 444-1960

Useful Links

State Entitlement Payments to Schools:

<http://www.opi.mt.gov/PUB/School%20Finance/Payments/>

School Accounting: <http://www.opi.mt.gov/SchoolFinance/Acct2.html>

Forms and Publications: <http://www.opi.mt.gov/SchoolFinance/Forms2.html>

Pupil Transportation: <http://www.opi.mt.gov/PupilTransport/index.html>

Enrollment and ANB: <http://www.opi.mt.gov/SchoolFinance/Enrollment2.html>

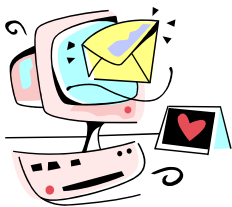
Tuition: <http://www.opi.mt.gov/SchoolFinance/Tuition2.html>

**School Finance
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**Happy
Valentines ☺**



From your friends in the School Finance Division!